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Montana
Office of Public Instruction
 Denise Juneau, State Superintendent



United States Department of Agriculture

More Bites for Your Buck\$ The USDA Foods Program and the Office of Public Instruction Cooperative Purchase Program

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| <p>The USDA Food Distribution Program is a U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) food distribution program that provides foods such as meats, vegetables, fruits, grains and dairy products to schools participating in the National School Lunch Program (NSLP). The USDA purchases these foods through direct appropriations from Congress and under surplus removal and price support activities.</p> | <p>The OPI Cooperative Purchase Program was developed to provide lower prices to schools on food items for use in school meals programs. This program allows small school districts to take advantage of substantial cost savings. The cost of each item is the same to all schools in the state regardless of their size or location.</p> |
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| Why should schools participate? | |
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| <i>USDA Foods</i> | <i>Cooperative Purchase</i> |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Offers a variety of nutritious foods at no cost to schools. All administrative paperwork is handled by Food Distribution. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Offers a variety of nutritious foods at a substantial cost savings to schools. Minimal administrative costs. Dollars go back to Montana schools. |

| Who can participate? | |
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| <i>USDA Foods</i> | <i>Cooperative Purchase</i> |
| Any school participating in the National School Lunch Program may receive USDA Foods. | Any school participating in the National School Lunch Program may use OPI's Cooperative Purchase Program to purchase low-cost foods. |

| Where do these foods come from? | |
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| <i>USDA Foods</i> | <i>Cooperative Purchase</i> |
| Foods are purchased from American producers by the USDA through direct appropriations from Congress, under surplus removal and price support activities. | Foods are purchased by individual schools from the vendor that wins the bid. All items on the bid are screened to ensure quality, nutritional integrity, and student acceptability. |

| How do I place an order? | |
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| <i>USDA Foods</i> | <i>Cooperative Purchase</i> |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use the online order form at http://www.opi.mt.gov/schoolfood/fooddistnew.html Orders are placed in January prior to the school year they will be delivered. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use the online order form at http://www.opi.mt.gov/schoolfood/cooperativenew.html There are two cooperative purchase orders: Fall orders are placed in May and Winter orders are placed in October. |
| The same login ID and password are used for both order forms | |

| Are there ordering limitations? | |
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| <i>USDA Foods</i> | <i>Cooperative Purchase</i> |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Entitlement dollars= daily meals x per meal value (about \$.22) x days. Foods ordered should be based on actual need. USDA Ordering Guidelines: 41% meat/fish, 32% poultry/eggs, 27% fruits and vegetables. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Schools must order from food selection chosen by the Advisory Bid Committee (ABC). Schools may order as much as their budgets allow. Once foods are ordered they cannot be cancelled. |

| When will I receive my orders? | |
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| <i>USDA Foods</i> | <i>Cooperative Purchase</i> |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Deliveries begin the 3rd week in August with a dry shipment and continue approximately every 3 weeks through March, alternating between dry and frozen. OPI Food Distribution determines the shipping schedule and distributes the food evenly. USDA Foods will not all come at once. Watkins and Shepard Trucking Co. makes the deliveries. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fall deliveries – There are four deliveries beginning in September; then every four weeks. Winter deliveries – There are four deliveries beginning in January; then every four weeks. Deliveries are made by the bid-winning company. |

| Are there any indirect costs? | |
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| <i>USDA Foods</i> | <i>Cooperative Purchase</i> |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> OPI Food Distribution pays for storage, handling, shipping and processing of all commodities with the state match funds. Cost breakdown per case: Shipping \$2.88 plus fuel surcharge Handling <u>\$1.25</u> Total \$4.13 (not including fuel surcharge) Processing fees: \$30-\$40 per case. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Schools are billed directly by the company for their purchases. Schools are billed by the OPI for an administrative fee to help defer costs of running the program. Fees are 3% of total cost of foods ordered. |

| Department of Defense Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program |
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| A portion of Montana's USDA Food entitlement is allocated to schools for purchasing fresh produce through the Department of Defense's FFAVORS online ordering program. This program requires a separate user ID and password. Please visit the OPI School Nutrition website for links to FFAVORS. |